

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 41, 44, 45, 48-58, 63-66, 68 and 85-105 are cancelled without prejudice. Claims 106-121 are added. No new matter is introduced. Accordingly claims 106-121 are presented for consideration.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that previous claims 86, 87 and 97-105 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In view of the newly introduced claims applicants submit that rewriting claims 86, 87 and 97-105 into independent form is unnecessary.

Basis for new claims 106-121:

Independent claim 106 is based on the subject matter of previous independent claim 85 but replacing "centering means and releasable fixation means" with "first and second releasable fixation members and first and second centering members", and replacing "releasable fixation means" with "releasable fixation portions".

Dependent claims 107 and 108 are respectively based on subject matter of previous dependent claims 86 and 87 modified to conform to changes in independent claim 106.

Dependent claim 109 includes subject matter not previously claimed based on paragraph 40 of the US published application.

Dependent claim 110 is based on subject matter of previous dependent claim 89 modified to conform to changes in independent claim 106 and including "screw receiving portions" based on paragraph 38 and Fig. 8 of the US published application.

Dependent claims 111, 112 and 113 are equivalent to previous dependent claims 89, 90 and 92, respectively.

Independent claim 114 is the same as current independent claim 106 but with the mounting adapter including only the visor, based on Figs. 3 and 4 of the US published application.

Dependent claims 115 and 116 are respectively based on subject matter of previous dependent claims 86 and 87 modified to conform to changes in independent claim 114.

Dependent claim 117 includes subject matter not previously claimed based on paragraph 40 of the US published application.

Dependent claim 118 is based on subject matter of previous dependent claim 89 modified to conform to changes in independent claim 106 and including "screw receiving portions" based on paragraph 38 and Fig. 8 of the US published application.

Dependent claims 119, 120 and 121 are equivalent to previous dependent claims 89, 90 and 92, respectively.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action sets forth at page 3, paragraph 5 "Claims 41, 44, 45, 48-50, 57, 65, 66, 68, 65, and 88-94 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bingle et al. ... In view of Asada et al. ..."; at page 16, paragraph 6 "Claims 51-53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bingle ... and Asada ... and further in view of Kameyama."; at page 17, paragraph 7 "Claims 54-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bingle ... and Asada ... and further in view of DeLine et al. ..."; at page 16, paragraph 8 "Claim 58 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bingle ... and Asada ... and further in view of Camus et al...."; at page 19, paragraph 9 "Claims 63 and 64 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bingle ... in view of Shirakawa ..."; and at page 22, paragraph 10 "Claims 95 and 96 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bingle ... in view of Asada ... and further in view of Kameyama ...". These rejections are obviated by the cancellation of these claims.

An image acquisition module according to new independent claims 106 and 114 comprises a camera housing and a mounting adapter having at least a visor, wherein the camera housing is directly attached to the mounting adapter and wherein the mounting adapter is directly attached to an external structure of a vehicle without the need of additional parts is not described in any of the cited documents and is not obvious from the combination of the cited documents.

Bingle et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication 2006/0171704) describe a camera housing 11 having a camera housing and a metallic protective shield or casing 16 attached to the camera housing 11. Camera housing 11 includes a camera housing portion 12 and a connector portion 14 attached to one another (paragraph 70 of the US Application Publication).

Mutually mating mounting tabs or flanges 12d, 14f extend outwardly from the camera housing portion 12 and connector portion 14 for mounting the camera module 10 at or to the vehicle via suitable fasteners or the like (paragraph 81 of the US Application Publication).

No visor and/or gutter are disclosed or suggested in Bingle et al. Further, the protective shield or casing 16 does not serve to attach the camera housing 11 to the vehicle. The mounting tabs or flanges 12d, 14f serve to attach the camera housing 11 to the vehicle with fasteners or the like.

Asada et al. (Japanese Patent Application Publication 2001-039243) disclose a camera housing 1, a camera mounting bracket 5, and a bezel element 4 having an opening and a visor and a gutter located about said opening. The camera mounting bracket 5 is attached to the camera housing 1, the bezel element 4 is attached to the mounting bracket 5, and the bezel element 4 and the mounting bracket 5 are attached to the vehicle by means of brackets 11 and bolts 20. Accordingly, Asada et al. fails to make up for the deficiencies of Bingle et al.

Applicants respectfully submit that it would not be obvious how to combine the image acquisition module of Bingle et al. with the image acquisition module of Asada et al. to obtain an image acquisition module having the features claimed in new independent claims 106 and 114 of the present application. Applicants respectfully request therefore that claims 106 and 114 be allowed.

Claims 107-113 and 115-121 depend upon claims 106 and 114, respectively and, thus, are likewise not subject to rejection for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claims 106 and 114.

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above applicants submit that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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